

## SIX NEW "LEADING LADIES" BY Alan Dale ON THE DRAMATIC HORIZON

MISS MAUD HOFFMAN IN "THE PHYSICIAN."

MISS MAY BUCKLEY IN "THE FIRST BORN."

MISS BEATRICE CAMERON IN "THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE."

MISS VESTA TILLEY IN VAUDEVILLE

MISS VIRGINIA HARNED IN "CHANGE ALLEY."

MISS AMELIA BINGHAM IN "THE PROPER CAPER."

A VERITABLE hullabaloo of theatrical novelty has been dinned into our ears during the past week. We have been wooed by ambitious actors and actresses to such an extent that on this cool and leisurely morning we scarcely know where we are. We have had no time to make any selection. We have simply been looking at things from Monday until Saturday night in chaotic bewilderment. Such an embarrassment of riches! Such a never-rains-but-it-pours state of affairs.

The manager can stand it; it is his little game of speculation. The actor can endure it, for the actor's soul is large, noble, unselfish and unenvied (yes, it is). But I should think that the actresses themselves—graceful, feminine, ingenious and winsome—would feel a little put out at the very divided attention that has been given them. One of these days there will be a clause in the leading lady's contract rendering it impossible for a manager to present her in New York during a crowded and plethoric week. An actress, when she is of the leading persuasion, needs a little frame all to herself. It must be most unpleasant for her to appear as a small clot in a unitum in parvo arrangement. I felt sorry for all during the past week. I wanted to single out one particular lady and wash her in adjectival niceness. But I can't do it. We get our leading ladies by the half dozen—a fine bunch of six.

I can deal out no golden apples. But I can allow the ladies to have the field to themselves, and perhaps that is the best policy. Suppose we have a little leading-lady seance, evoked from my own prophetic inwardness. Turn out the lights and pull down the blinds. Imagine that I'm shutting my eyes and doing the regular hoky-poky sort of thing.

Are you ready? Ladies and gentlemen, the seance has begun.

It is a pretty scene—a boudoir patched and warm, daintily furnished and pleasantly set. They are all there—Beatrice Cameron, in sweetest conjugal devotion to the absent Richard of "The Devil's Disciple," little Miss May Buckley, from aureate San Francisco, done up in Chinese feathers and reeking of incense; Maud Hoffman, as the advocate of E. S. Willard's production of "The Physician"; Amelia Bingham, with a certificate of beauty and the burden of "The Proper Caper" on her shoulders; Vesta Tilley, as the Picaresque Johnny, with an eyeglass in her ocular, and Virginia Harned, who was to have appeared at a Thursday matinee as Pauline in "The Lady of Lyons," and who was not to be balked of her rights because the matinee was postponed.

Miss Cameron: "I am sorry for you all, my girls, but you are bound to admit that every first-night critic in town went to see Richard and myself at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, Monday night, in the 'Devil's Disciple.' I am a meek and unassuming little thing, simply spattered with wit and lovely feminine qualities, but still I can't help knowing that I was the leading lady of the week. I don't ascribe it to any personal charms. Not a bit of it. You know, my dears, that I am merely the feminine accompaniment of my Richard. I am the perfect stage wife, cast for leading business. And I was honored at the Fifth Avenue Theatre. My husband put my Christian name on the programme. It was the only one there except his own. I felt most elated and happy about it. My success is largely due to a delightful lack of personality. I revel in that lack, darlings. My aim in life is to be colorless and insipid. They accuse me

them; to be the woman in his case, without being the case itself, and I think I succeed. I am never interviewed. I have nothing to say except "Dick." I have never lost a diamond in my life; never owned a pug dog; never received a mash note. I don't know what fine clothes mean, and as for the word "lingerie," I can't find it in Webster. Take everything into consideration, and yield me the palm. I'll give it at once to Dick for safe keeping. I think I deserve to get it, don't you?"

her wifeliness. I stand up for art with a capital A. If the interviewers want to interview me I shall not object. Why should I? The palm is undoubtedly mine. If I don't get it, I shall consider it none the less mine. In all justice, May Buckley is the nearest approach to a sensation of the week.

(Miss Buckley trips back to her seat, and sits as comfortably as she can in her Chinese garment. Her look of fancy bazaar is distinctly in her favor, and her associates frown and murmur saucy things.



AMELIA BINGHAM

IN "THE PROPER CAPER"

(Miss Cameron sits down and folds her hands demurely in her lap. The leading ladies purse their lips, betray rather rebellious smiles, and rehearse their own little recitations. Miss May Buckley steps forward in her Chinese get-up and walks with a little Yum-Yum step to the centre of the room.)

Miss Buckley: You have heard the remarks of my sister. They probably struck you, as they struck me—as rather palid and lifeless. I am here as a novelty—and the world is crazy for novelty. I am the Chinese heroine of "The First Born," and I gave New Yorkers something new in the shape of a Chinese lady with a brace-a-brac past. I am a dainty little thing, and I came from San Francisco without a word of advertisement. If I had been an ordinary creature of boom and noise, you would have read columns about the years I spent in China studying for this role. You would have been told that I was born with Chinese propensities, and that the first words I uttered in my mother's arms were "Chow-chow." I eschewed all this. I burst upon you like a pretty little

"I Have  
Never  
Lost a  
Diamond  
In My  
Life."



VESTA

TILLEY

IN VAUDEVILLE



MAY BUCKLEY

IN "THE FIRST BORN"

Miss Maud Hoffman, of Willard's company, comes slowly forward, and casts a look of well-studied girlishness at her audience.)

Miss Hoffman: I have had very little stage experience, dears, but I put in my claim none the less ferretly for that. What does stage experience mean—nothing but an artificial education, and a knowledge of the unlovely tricks of the trade. I am thoroughly artless and simple. You see I was obliged to be artless and simple, because I was once with Mr. Daly, and Miss Rehan insists that none of her "support" shall be colored. But think of my present chance—my promotion. Here I am playing the part in "The Physician" that was interpreted by Mary Moore in London—an actress of many years standing—like most of you, my dears. Oh, I am not casting slurs at actresses who have acted for years. It ages them, of course, but it keeps them in good engagements. Mr. Willard selected me because I was young, pretty and unsophisticated. The public likes that style of a girl to-day. I play a lovely part, that of a girl who in the beginning of the play is very much in love with one man, and at the end of the play very much in love with another. "Oh, tell me what I can do?" I cry. What can I do? I don't want to be cruel to him—I don't want to drive him to that, but whatever happens, I cannot marry him. I cannot! I cannot! I cannot! Isn't that sweet? And I say it all so brightly and naively. I have listened to Miss Cameron and to Miss Buckley, but I cannot see that they have any leg—I mean peg—to stand upon. Let me have the palm. It is mine, most assuredly.

(Miss Hoffman retires to the tune of titters. They laugh at her claims, and at her enthusiasm. She goes back to her chair and hums, "I am such an artless thing." Miss Amelia Bingham, with an air of lofty condescension, and a very swell dress, displaying the curves of a voluminous but well regulated figure, addresses the house.)

Miss Bingham: I'm a beauty, and I got a prize in a popular actress contest. I advertise patent medicines. If a doctor or merchant wants to sell his castor oil, all he has got to do is to say that Amelia Bingham takes it. I suppose that Amelia Bingham is inclined to despise me. I can understand that, and I advise you to keep on doing it. There must be some satisfaction in it. Only recently I appeared in spangles and tulle, with a gallon of lime-light play-

ing upon me as "Nature, at the Academy of Music. I should like to see Miss Cameron as Nature. Ha! Ha! Ha! Or Miss Buckley, or Miss Hoffman. He! He! He! I am versatile, however. I appeared with young Mr. Boucicault in Irish plays, and now I'm in a French farce at Hoyt's. What is a Chinese leading lady to a combination of Irish and French? Why, absolutely nothing at all. In the contest of this week it is undoubtedly Amelia Bingham who comes out first. She is not a novice, or a mere husband's wife, or a silly, unsophisticated

pressed them. The dreaded music hall that managers hate is casting its shadow upon them. Miss Tilley capers from the vantage point, chanting "I've been showing my Aunt Matilda round the town." There is a moment's silence, and slowly Miss Virginia Harned appears.)

Miss Harned: Luckily for you all, girls, my matinee was postponed, and I can scarcely claim a place in this contest. Still, I was announced; I was expected, and as there will be no such competition next week I may as well be in this. I have lit-

I see visions of police, riot, bloodshed. Suddenly the room grows dark, spooky, and into the air creeps the of a portent. A chilly gust of wind enters the room, and the ladies sit shuddering and goose-fleshed. It is a horrible an eerie moment—the dawn of some that is to happen. They sit huddled up, Cameron, Miss Buckley, Miss Hoffman, Miss Bingham, Miss Tilley and Miss Harned. They are momentarily sisters; the palm seems a thing absurd and t. Slowly the door opens and a great beam of the calmest kind of light enters the room. The actresses clutch other. A dreadful fear surges over. The worst happens. It is as they drift into the room, following the calcium, the thin blanch form of Cleo de Mer. They can hear their own breaths hissing, count their own pulses pulsing their own nerves nerving.

"Medams," says Cleo, in a voice penetrates through the calcium beam have heard it all through the keyhole ask you this: Has any lady prevented a colfure?"

And then, amid the shrieks and groans of the desperate, baffled girls, arises, calmly pocketing the palms of week, and walks away over the prost bodies of her sisters.

Ladies and gentlemen, the seance ended.

ALAN DAI

Here Is a Machine That Removes Danger of Railroad Trains Colliding

A MACHINE to prevent forgetfulness has just been invented by a Western genius. By its use one of chief evils of railroad travel is removed—provided railroad engineers orders.

The machine has just stood a very test on the Great Northern Railroad, having been previously operated successfully on the St. Paul and Duluth. Practical railroad men have given indorsements to the device after its work. The object of the device is to provide an accurate and reliable signal and distance indicator for trains, by means of which engineers prevented from forgetting their train as to stopping or meeting point.

The mechanism is simply but positively connected with the forward trucks of engine, thereby accurately measuring distance travelled, a dial placed in of the engineer—showing correctly distance. Above the smaller of the dials are placed fifteen triangles, each pivoted at equal distances across centre. When the engineer receives orders he sets one or more of the gers to a point on the train. The distance to be travelled is shown on the stopping place.

The mileage indicator, on reaching point, releases the trigger, while a signal whistle blowing. This is to blow for one quarter of a mile, warning the engineer of the near to stopping place. If the engine attentive and fails to stop when mile has been run over, the machine the air brake and stops the train. A train similarly equipped could opposite direction would be stopped same manner and a collision prevented.

"It is  
Feminine  
Stars  
That Should  
Twinkle  
Most  
Twinkle-  
somety."

tle to say, I have listened to you all. Clever women, every one of you; each entitled to consideration. However, now that I am here, you may as well withdraw. You see I am a completely legitimate actress, and I am the leading lady of Mr. Sothern's company. Occasional I have reduced Mr. Sothern to the position of leading gentleman. I am willing to do this at any time, as I believe in the supremacy of my own sex. I am exceedingly refined, as you all know; in fact, the atmosphere that surrounds me is very different to that with which you are all associated. Maudfeld is not Sothern, my dear Miss Cameron. A Chinese play from San Francisco is far from recherche, my dear Miss Buckley. Mr. Willard's company is not a New York affair, my beloved Maud Hoffman, and to you, Miss Bingham, I say this: spangles and tulle have never yet been considered good form. As for Miss Tilley—what did you say it was? Tilley—oh, yes, thank you; as for Miss Harned, I have never heard of you before, and hope never to hear of you again. That is all I have to say, ladies. Ta-ta. The contest is ended, and the struggle



MAUD HOFFMAN

IN "THE PHYSICIAN"

of the gurgle and the asthmatic wheeze, but I adopt these merely to give my enemies something to write about. I am the most unusual leading lady on the stage, because I never do anything that the world could possibly talk about. I prefer to read discussions about Dick and his art—and so, I think, does Dick. I like to move about cattily and unpretentiously; to furnish Dick with love scenes when he wants

"I Believe  
In the  
Supremacy  
of My  
Own Sex."

vision, and last Wednesday morning the critics accorded me unanimous praise. I consider myself the feature of the week, and if you don't believe me, ask my managers what they think. And my costumes—my make-up—my deliberate sacrifice of all my American beauties! Don't you think that they count with the public. Miss Cameron's remarks were simply calculated to inspire you with appreciation of

gurgle. She is a real actress who acts that is what the public needs—an actress who acts. Like Miss Cameron, I have a husband, but I am true to my sex, and it is my name that goes. Who ever heard of Lloyd Melville? Who ever heard of him as long as I have the power to shine and dazzle? It is feminine stars that should twinkle most twinklesomely, and your Amelia tries hard. A stage wife's duty to her husband is to keep him in the background. I say that to your face, Beatrice Cameron. Hand over the palm to me, ladies, and consider yourselves obliterated.

(Miss Bingham moves away in exquisitely haughty swishes. She undulates to her seat and surveys the astonished ladies through half-closed eyes of supreme disdain. A moment later, with a dash and a bound, a typical "Johnnie," in faultless frock coat and glossiest of toppers, has taken her place, and Miss Vesta Tilley is recognized.)

Miss Tilley: I'm a variety artist, and I'm proud of it; because variety is all the rage to-day, and I can bet that I earn more money in a week, my beauties, than you do in a year. You call yourselves leading ladies. Pah! You lead nothing; you are led. Poor things! Why you are merely a small part of a play; a fraction of a cast; persons who could be replaced by understudies who could possibly far outshine you. Look at me, I am an entertainment in myself. I'm a whole show of three-quarters of an hour's duration. They hang on my words. People come to the theatre at the hour that I am announced, and leave when I have finished. I set the fashions for the other sex. You follow those of your own. Men smoke and drink and relax the severity of their thoughts when they look at me. You ask them to sit up in starched and sullen silence and to wax sympathetic. Not one of you could get along without sympathy. I need none. I wouldn't know what to do with it if I got it. I'm the Picaresque Johnny who makes you laugh, and if there is any palm in circulation this week, I want it. I am the star of the week—the only star that shines alone in the firmament. Try and sing my songs if you can. Drop into Weber & Fields and see my nightly reception. Ha! I am sorry for you all. In fact I hardly like to take the palm, because it is so obviously mine.

"I Am  
Thoroughly  
Artless  
and  
Simple."

(There is consternation now on the features of every lady. Miss Tilley has im-



VIRGINIA HARNED

IN "CHANGE ALLEY"